

# Dual portraits of Reagan, Bush honor inaugural

By Roger Boye

**A** Romanian-born immigrant who survived Nazi labor camps has designed the "official medal" commemorating this week's inauguration of President Reagan and Vice President George Bush.

Sixty-one-year-old artist Mico Kaufman recently told a hobby writer that he worked on the medal longer than anything else he has done, attempting to create "something unconventional." His handiwork sports the dual portraits of Reagan and Bush in an unusual profile, a design that Kaufman completed after a 50-minute sitting with the President in November.

Kaufman's piece is one of at least three privately produced medals marking the inauguration, but it is the only one sanctioned by the Reagan inaugural committee. Royalties from each sale of an "official medal" will help support Monday's swearing-in ceremonies in Washington.

"Official" inaugural medals have been issued since William McKinley's second term in 1901; today, many of the older specimens are prized collectibles. For example, experts say the Theodore Roosevelt piece of 1905—with a mintage of just 125—may be the rarest of all 20th-Century bronze medals. It has brought \$5,700 at auction.

The Reagan-Bush medals—produced by the Medallic Art Co. and the Franklin Mint—range in price from \$10 for a 1½-inch bronze specimen to \$550 for a smaller 14-karat gold specimen. Several coin dealers are selling the medals; for mail-order information, call the Franklin Mint, toll-free, at 800-468-1005.

Kaufman also designed the "official" inaugural medals of Gerald Ford in 1973 and 1974, as well as hundreds of other items.

● The federal government's newest bronze medal honors Congressman Leo J. Ryan, who was murdered more than six years ago in Guyana while investigating the Rev. Jim Jones and his religious cult. The 1½-inch specimens are replicas of a Congressional gold medal that President Reagan presented to Ryan's family in November.

The cost per medal is \$2.25; to order, send a check to the United States Mint [Medals], P.O. Box 500, Philadelphia, Pa. 19105.

Meanwhile, Treasury Department executives are seeking designs for a medal honoring U.S. veterans of the Vietnam War. The initials of the winning artist or artists will appear on the medal, but there is no monetary award in the national competition.

For more information or contest rules, call the United States Mint at 202-376-0560. Deadline for entries is Feb. 28; the medals will be sold to the public, possibly starting in late 1985.